

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 CU-02 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9241

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 19785

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TH

SUBJECT: CURRENT EVENTS IN THE STUDENT SPHERE

REF: BANGKOK 13783

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE STUDENTS HAVE DISCOVERED THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT AGAINST WHICH THEY PROTEST HAS NO MONOPOLY ON CORRUPTION. TWO SEPARATE EMBEZZLEMENT CASES INVOLVING A TOTAL OF 600,000 BAHT (\$30,000) HAVE HIT THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND (NSCT) AND THE UNITED STUDENTS AND PEOPLES FRONT (USPF). THE NSCT HAS HAD TO POSTPONE ITS LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS UNTIL JANUARY, AND OUTSTANDING CANDIDATES ARE LACKING. THE SCANDALS WILL HURT THE STUDENT MOVEMENT BOTH IN TERMS OF FUND RAISING AND MORALE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE NSCT HAS ACCUSED BORIPAT METHAWAT, THE CHIEF OF ITS FINANCE DEPARTMENT, OF EMBEZZLING 570,534 BAHT (ABOUT \$28,500), BUT BORIPAT ADMITS TO ONLY ABOUT 400,000 BAHT (\$20,000), AND SAYS HE WILL REPAY IT NEXT YEAR. HE ALSO DISCLAIMS ANY WRONGDOING (SIC).

2. THE USPF CLAIMS THAT ONE KRIANGSAK KRODI EMBEZZLED 100,000 BAHT (\$5,000) FROM ADVERTISEMENT FEES FOR THE USPF MAGAZINE AND USED IT TO SET UP HIS OWN MAGAZINE, "NAW PAW CHAW". KRIANGSAK CLAIMS THAT THE USPF IS NOT A
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LEGAL ENTITY AND CANNOT SUE, AND FURTHERMORE HE HAD A

RIGHT TO USE THE MOANEY SINCE HE FOUND THE SPONSORS (SIC, AGAIN).

3. THE NSCT HAS NOW SET ELECTIONS FOR A SECRETARY GENERAL FOR 12 JANUARY 1975. NO ONE HAS YET REGISTERED AS A CANDIDATE AND PROMISING POTENTIAL CANDIDATES ARE SCARCE. THE NSCT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IS SO RENT WITH IDEOLOGICAL AND CLIQUE RIVALRIES THAT IT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CHOOSE A SECRETARY GENERAL SINCE LAST AUGUST. THE THAMMASAT STUDENT UNION PRESIDENT HAS PROPOSED THAT THE STUDENT BODIES OF ALL THE UNIVERSITIES ELECT THE NSCT SECRETARY GENERAL, AND THE NSCT MAY BE CONSIDERING THIS STRUCTURAL CHANGE, WHICH WOULD HELP MAKE THE NSCT AS DEMOCRATIC AS IT SAYS THE NATIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEM OUGHT TO BE.

4. COMMENT: THE NSCT IS OBVIOUSLY IN TROUBLE. THE RECENT CASES OF CORRUPTION TARNISH THE STUDENTS' PUBLIC IMAGE AND WILL HURT NSCT FUND RAISING EFFORTS. MANY STUDENTS ARE AS DISSATISFIED WITH THE NSCT'S STRUCTURE AND POLITICAL PROCESSES AS THEY ARE WITH NATIONAL POLITICS. STUDENT POLITICAL REPUTATION AND INFLUENCE MAY CONTINUE TO DECLINE UNLESS SOME CRISIS IN NATIONAL POLITICS REGALVANIZES THE STUDENT MOVEMENT.

KINTNER

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